

## CHILD PROTECTION PRACTICES AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL

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### Abstract

The existing research was aimed to investigate the child protection practices and its implementation at elementary level of Islamabad region. Survey research was adopted and thereby a questionnaire on five point Likert scale was developed and used for data collection. A sample of 264 teachers (Public schools=87 and Private school=177) was selected through stratified sampling method. Linear regression and independent sample t-test was used. The study concluded that seminars and training has significant impact on the child protection practices. Teaching staff were well-aware where child protection awareness seminars were arranged. In addition, NGOs focused to conduct seminars and training in private sector schools whereas no proper activities were arranged to implement child protection practices in public sector schools.

**Keywords:** Child Protection Practices, Seminars & Trainings, Non- Government Organization

### INTRODUCTION

The primary responsibility of the every state is to ensure the safe and conducive environment and the protection of the right of every individual. Moreover, state must provide basic and equal rights to every individual in which every citizen feel secure in their working and living domain. In other words, the most vital function of the state is to protect the lives of every individual living the state from human right violation. Thereby, many government and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are playing their role in different aspects like child protection from sexual, psychological and physical violence and protecting human rights (Bajpai, 2018)

In developing countries, there are many issues related to child abuse, bullying and physical violence. Evidence reported that many children suffer psychological and physical abuse due to no implementation of child protection laws. Thereby, the drop out ratio at elementary school level is increasing day by day which negatively

impact on the mental and physical health of the students (Gilling & Akhtar, 2005). In Pakistan, law is protecting every individual from human violence. Majority of population of Pakistan is Muslim and people in Pakistani society follows Islamic Sharia. Children are fully protected in Islamic society (Javid et al., 2020).

Pakistan is trying to implement the child protection laws to save children from all kind of abuse. Unfortunately, such efforts are failed to implement a good system of child protection. The major issues that there is lack of awareness regarding child protection laws (Jabeen, 2016). Even parents, teachers and students have unaware about the child protection laws. There are no such child protection awareness programs at school levels. Resultantly, the rate of child abuse reported day by day at elementary school level. Thus, the present study was explored the perception of teachers of public and private elementary schools of Islamabad region and explore the role of NGOs in child protection awareness programs.

Following objectives were made to achieve:-

1. To find out the impact of seminars and trainings on the child protection practices at elementary level.
2. To compare the views of teachers of Public and Private schools regarding child protection practices and its implementation
3. To suggest recommendation to improve implementation level of child protection practices at elementary level

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **CHILD RIGHT AND CHILD PROTECTION**

Child rights are defined by the UNCRC as "basic freedoms and entitlements that must be available to all persons who are under the age of 18 regardless of color, language, gender, race, opinions, religion, origins, birth status, wealth, or aptitude and must apply to all persons (Freeman, 2009). According to Skelton (2007) every kid has the right to be shielded from societal problems that can have an adverse effect on their views, conduct, and future. Every state recognizes the rights of all people. Although the aspect is different for children and adults, the rights are the same. Children are physically and mentally undeveloped, thus the state gives them specific rights that encourage the development of their skills. A youngster may be a vulnerable member of the family, but under no circumstances can he be viewed as helpless. There are unique obligations and rights for development so that the child can enjoy a simple life (Kumuda, 2014).

The field of child protection is huge. This covers a range of child-related topics, the subject of abuse, as well as the prevention and eradication of abuse. The main issues that children face are related to their cultural, economic, and social surroundings, which have a terrible impact on society and everyone (Fortin, 2003).

### **SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS ROLE TO PROTECT CHILDREN**

Schools and teachers may both make a significant contribution to giving kids a secure and violent-free environment. Schools offer a great and secure environment for the prevention of abuse, especially for

kids who are impoverished, are abused, or have other issues. This allows them to interact and converse with their classmates effortlessly. Teachers can assist the school administration in protecting children by reporting the abused students (Baeck, 2018).

Teachers can also immediately detect and keep track of children's shifting attitudes. Sometimes the student grows extremely close to the teacher and readily discloses abuse and problems in the home. Cases of child abuse must be reported to top authorities due to strict legislation in other nations. "This is especially crucial in industrialized and advanced nations to ensure that the framework for students is followed in the best possible way, as well as to help students and keep them safe from mental health difficulties. In these nations, child safety laws are strictly upheld, and educators and other stakeholders have received training and awareness campaigns (Cicchetti & Toth, 2005).

Lack of an organized structure has a significant negative impact on Pakistan's child protection system. Inadequate legislation and enforcement, a lack of properly trained instructors and experts, disparate attitudes toward child rearing, a lack of research on children's rights, their protection, and related issues are some of the causes that make it difficult to safeguard children. Definitions and conceptual depictions of the abuse have occasionally been made, however there is still uncertainty in these justifications. The WHO criteria are utilized because Pakistan hasn't been able to develop its own legal definition of child abuse or any of its other manifestations. This is a result of confusing procedures, as well as teachers, professionals, and other stakeholders' lack of awareness and understanding (Pulla et al., 2018).

Teachers and all other professionals lack a clear description of their obligations in regards to child protection. In Pakistan, there is no effective system in place to stop child abuse and guarantee their safety. Children belong to their parents and are under their guardianship. Nobody in the state or society is permitted to meddle with or inquire into their business. Family respect, modesty, and attitudes are other factors that impact a child's upbringing (Gilligan & Akhtar, 2005).

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE STUDY

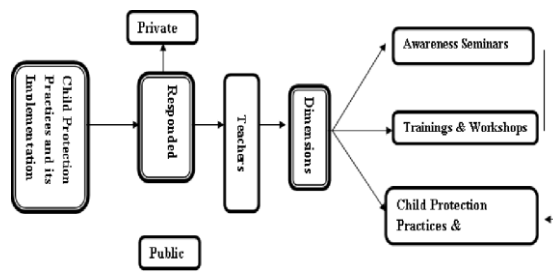


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

- H<sub>01</sub>: Seminars and Trainings has significant impact on the child protection practices of public sector Schools
- H<sub>02</sub>: Seminars and Trainings has significant impact on the child protection practices of private sector Schools.
- H<sub>03</sub>: The views of Public and Private school teachers about research variables are significant.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research followed Positivism research Philosophy. Positivism adheres to the view that only “factual” knowledge gained through observation (the senses), including measurement, is trustworthy (Crossan, 2013). Those schools were taken in the study where Non-Government Organization (NGOs) was engaged in child protection practices programs. Six (06) government schools and 18 private schools were included in the sample. Thus, a sample of a sample 264 teachers was selected through stratified sampling method. Researcher used questionnaire (five-point Likert scale) for data collection. First part of the questionnaire contained demographic part (Sector and Designation) whereas second part of the questionnaire three dimensions of child protection practices i.e. awareness seminars (8 items), training and workshop (6 items), child protection practices and implementation (14 items). Yamane (1967) formula was applied to determine the sample size of the study.

Table 1: Sample size

E	N	Sample Size	Teachers
.05	784	$\frac{784}{1+784(.058.05)}$	Public Private
Formula	$\frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$	264	87 177

Validity and Reliability of Research Tool

Validation of the questionnaire was estimated through index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC). IOC is a method of measuring content validity of the research instrument through test developers of subject experts to rate the item relevancy and sentence structure. Reliability of the questionnaire was done through Cronbach’s Alpha. Table 2 shows the estimated value of IOC and Cronbach’s Alpha

Table 2: IOC and Reliability Score

Dimensions	IOC (Including min. and mix value)	Cronbach’s Alpha
Seminars	0.7-0.9	.876
Training & Workshop	0.6-1.0	.817
Child protection practices & Implementation	0.5-9.0	.854

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 H<sub>01</sub>: Seminars and Trainings have significant impact on the child protection practices of Public sector Schools.

IV	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F	β	Sig.	D-W
Seminars	.37	.14	.135	25.9	.26	.00	.44

D

Table 3 shows the regression output regarding the association between training and child protection practices. The table reveals that the value R<sup>2</sup> = .140 which indicates that 14% variation found in the child protection practices due to trainings conducted in public schools. In addition, the positive beta depicts that a single unit changed in the independent variable (seminars &

trainings) than .262 units changed in dependent variable (child protection practices). The Durban Watson score (.445) shows that there is no autocorrelation between the two variables.

**Table 4 H<sub>02</sub>: Seminars and Trainings has significant impact on the child protection practices of Private sector Schools**

IV	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F	β	Sig.	D-W
Seminars	.85	.72	.721	415.8	.44	.00	.33
	1	3		8	6	0	7

**DV: Child Protection Practices**

Table 4 shows the regression output regarding the association between training and child protection practices. The table reveals that the value R<sup>2</sup> =.723 which indicates that 72% variation found in the child protection practices due to trainings conducted in private schools. In addition, the positive beta depicts that a single unit changed in the independent variable (seminars & trainings) than .846 units changed in dependent variable (child protection practices). The Durban Watson score (.357) shows that there is no autocorrelation between the two variables.

**H<sub>03</sub>: Table 5 H<sub>03</sub>: The views of Public and Private school teachers about research variables is significant**

Research Variables	School type	Mean	SD	p	Effect Size
Awareness Seminars	Public	2.17	1.45	.000	.732
	Private	4.12	.657		
Training & Workshops	Public	2.67	1.33	.000	.574
	Private	4.22	4.17		
CPP & Implementation	Public	3.47	.976	.000	.987
	Private	4.29	.398		

*p* < .05

Table 5 shows the difference in teachers' views regarding research variables. The result infers that significant difference was found in the views of public and private school teachers in perspective of awareness seminars

(*p* = .000 < .05), training & workshop (*p* = .000 < .05) and child protection practices (*p* = .000 < .05). The mean score indicates that awareness seminars were arranged in private schools (Mean=4.12) as compared to public schools (Mean=2.17). The mean score indicates that trainings were conducted arranged in private schools (Mean=4.22) as compared to public schools (Mean=1.33). Similarly, the mean score indicates that Child protection practices and implemented more effectively in private schools (Mean=4.29) as compared to public schools (Mean=3.47).

**DISCUSSION**

The key objective of the study was focused on CPP and its implementation at elementary school level of Islamabad region. The result of the study indicates that there is significant impact of training and seminars on the CPP and implementation at elementary level. Similar findings were given by Gün et al. (2022) and İskender et al. (2021). They found that teachers' knowledge levels on child neglect and abuse significantly increased after training. The findings of the study depicts that there is significant difference in the teachers views of public and private sectors in perspective of seminars, training and child protection practices. Similar result was found by Mohammed and Khudair (2019); Samundri (2020). They explored that Child protection practices found properly implemented in private schools as compared to government schools.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Child protection is debatably one of the most highly intense fields of social policy. There is no doubt that child protection issues always evoke a keen public concern which requires to be solved at first place. In the current study, researcher investigated the Child Protection Practices (CPP) and its implementation at elementary schools of the capital city (Islamabad) of Pakistan. On the basis inferential statistical results, the study concluded that the perception of public and private teachers found different in perspective of seminar and training regarding CPP. There is no such awareness programs are conducted about CPP and child protection laws whereas private

schools took NGOs services regarding CPP. The study concluded that seminars and training play a vital and significant role in enhancing awareness regarding child protection laws among stakeholders. Teaching staff were well-aware where child protection awareness seminars were arranged. The implementation level of child protection in private schools found much better than government schools.

There is no such awareness seminars are conducted in government schools. Thereby, the study suggested that government may focus to arrange such seminars may conduct to aware stakeholders regarding CPP and child protection laws. Reading materials may provide to teachers and students to aware them about child protection practices. The study recommended that Parent Teacher Association (PTC) may properly active in the implementation of child protection practices.

#### LIMITATIONS AND RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

This study comprises of some limitations due to lack of time and financial resources. Past research studies also investigated similar studies by using Mixed Methods Research (MMR) but researcher focused on quantitative aspect. The current research has practical implication for policy makers to provide evidence regarding child protection practices in public schools at elementary level and give a path to develop a mechanism for a child protection policies and its implementation.

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